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Institutional Successes and Professional Insecurities on the Continent of the Founders of Sociology

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Résumé. Quand on compare le développement de la sociologie, l'organisation des études universitaires et les perspectives professionnelles des étudiants il apparaît que, en ce qui concerne la naissance de la discipline elle-même et son application sociale, il existe sur le plan européen des problèmes communs qui montrent que toute restriction traditionnelle et artificielle de la sociologie à l'échelle nationale est dénuée de sens sur le plan pragmatique et stratégique. Bien plus, les convergence des incertitudes britanniques, allemandes, françaises, italiennes et dans une moindre mesure hollandaises prêchent en faveur d'une professionnalisation de la sociologie dans le cadre d'une comparaison nationale et internationale des disciplines pour chercher en commun une issue à ces crises disciplinaires. L'arrêt de la croissante continue en sociologie et l'augmentation des doutes résultants de déceptions quant aux espoirs sur son développement semble menacer l'unité même de la discipline, pour tant qu'elle ait jamais existé, sur le plan institutionnel et professionnel. Le lien généralement admis entre activité sociologique et développement d'un Etat national assurant la sécurité sociale est, du fait des crises conjoncturelles et de la réduction du budget des Etats, en voie de dissolution et une importance accrue à l'échelle internationale (Nowotny 1993: 12) n'est pas en vue. Les changements économiques, sociaux et politiques imposent une nouvelle orientation des fonctions scientifiques. Si sur cette toile de fond une réorganisation de la sociologie prometteuse de succès doit aboutir, il sera indispensable d'analyser dans le détail les conditions et restrictions de son application dans le contexte européen. Let's do it!

Resumen. La comparación del desarrollo de la sociología, la organización de su estudio como materia universitaria de enseñanza y las perspectivas profesionales de sus graduados muestra que, considerando el surgimiento de una unidad relativa a la materia y de la posibilidad de una utilización social de la disciplina, existen problemas europeos comunes, los cuales convierten en una cuestión sin sentido a la delimitación artificial de tradiciones sociológicas nacionales a un nivel pragmático y estratégico. Las inseguridades de una disciplina que debe profesionalizarse constituyen más bien el elemento de coincidencia entre las sociologías británica, alemana, francesa, italiana y – en menor grado – la holandesa. Estas inseguridades reclaman la búsqueda de salidas comunes de esta crisis de la sociología, las cuales deben ser tenidas en cuenta en las futuras comparaciones de disciplinas nacionales e internacionales. Las transformaciones económicas, sociales y políticas en curso exigen una redefinición de la función de las ciencias. Si sobre esta base ha de tener éxito una reorganización de la sociología, será de imperiosa necesidad investigar en detalle las condiciones y restricciones de su aplicabilidad social en un contexto europeo. Let's do it!

Searching for the Identity of Sociology (or the Sociologies) in Europe

With the advent of the European Union, an analysis of sociology's theoretical, institutional and social identity can no longer be limited to national entities. Moreover, since its beginnings, sociology in particular – as a comparatively young discipline and child of Modernity – has risen above national limitations, and worked on a body of international knowledge – the European founders and their American successors each providing stimulus for one another. In the following account of sociological education, research and its application in several specially selected European countries, we would like to deal with the basic institutional framework and societal status of sociology. Since the extent of these phenomena however can only be understood in connection with the national peculiarities of sociological thought and because the attempt at comparison is fraught with unexpected problems of data-collection and documentation (Lamnek 1993, van Meter 1993), even despite limiting the selection locally to five neighbouring countries (all extremely similar due to their central nature), many of the relevant aspects can only be followed on an explorative level and understood more along rough lines of developments in the history of theory and reciprocal methodological position defining.

Clearly when presenting national sociological traditions, the conceptualisation and reconstruction of the main currents of theory and methods by referring to outstanding individual national researchers always receives the most attention and thus international discipline comparisons are defined rather as sub-areas of sociological history than an integral part of research into the sociology of science, organisational sociology, professional sociology or even occupational sociology (Nedelmann/Sztompka 1993, Mohan/Martindale 1977). The aim and working perspective of further research undertakings is to encourage these mostly theoretically based and implicitly extremely effective ideas about European sociology's peculiarities and similarities to link back to structural features of scientific and disciplinary organisation and the sociological concept of the profession. In this context, we see the characteristics of sociology's teaching, research, education, application and professional usefulness that are specific to each country as indicators of the discipline's maturity.

As we can see from the way this collection of essays is organised, on the one hand, a more or less clear concept of its own academic profile ex-

ists amongst the German sociological community, at the same time however, the numerous perspectives and interests outlined above indicate rather a thoroughly international structuring of sociological activities. "From the American perspective 'European Sociology,' when symbolically reconstructed, has stood for a richness of theoretical alternatives and an acute consciousness of history, both of which have been reinforced by political and cultural experience" (Scaff 1992: 220). According to this, widely differing historical experiences and constitutional political differences are to be understood as intensifying or restricting factors in a continual movement between international convergence and local particularisms in the sense that "national, ideological, political, institutional and social factors" endanger the existence of a "universal valid body of knowledge with unconditional agreement on fundamental concepts and research problems" (Scaff 1992: 218). This often forced comparison of American sociology as the guardian of professional standards and academic unity as opposed to the pluralising influences of European social theory may sound a little worn out, especially when one notices, as Albrow has, that "the difficulty in characterizing European sociology is that it has only one competitor at its own level of development and that it is closely related and intertwined with it" (Albrow 1993: 88). Nevertheless, clearly reciprocal perceptions are at work here, which are permanently reproduced in the work of sociologists and which reflect moreover important historical similarities in the post-war development of sociology in Central Europe: "Thus, following the strong influence exerted by the hegemony of the 'American Social Science Model' after the Second World War, the 1970s marked a certain break and saw the reassertion of a more distinctive European identity" (Nowotny 1993: 8). In any case the changing dialogue between America and Europe marks a useful point of comparison for the differences and similarities within European sociology – elements which are represented in the different ways in which themes are dealt with, the distribution and prominence of diverse theoretical viewpoints, the function and structuring of training and exchange programmes, above all however in the way in which sociology is embedded in its institutions on each continent and the relationships it has to sponsors and supporters outside the academic world.

Taking as our example the three classical founding countries of sociological thought, namely France, Germany and Italy, the linguistic and

cultural mediator between the continent and the USA, namely Britain, and an interesting "outsider," the Netherlands, we will attempt to outline the extent to which a theoretical criterion of professional maturity has been approached. Although the strict guidelines of professionalization (Lamnek 1993: 22ff) are largely aimed at career success and self-determination thus counteracting the sociology's own self-reflection (which occurs primarily within the discipline and is determined according to academic criteria), these can be consciously transferred from the ideal societal positions based on the knowledge, education and job markets into three leading indicators for the investigation. Thus it is necessary to ask if sociology in the individual countries has acquired its own independent academic performance profile, whether it represents a socially relevant capacity and whether it has achieved a certain degree of academic and research-related institutionalization. In this context, questions and problems associated with professional policy and the employment market gain considerable significance, however they must be excluded here due to a lack of space: a more detailed treatment of this area can be found in Lamnek (1993).

The Development and Institutionalization of Sociology as an Academic Discipline

Some impressions of the history of the discipline cannot be avoided if an outline of the traditional and culturally determined differences of sociology (or sociological models) in the countries of comparison is to be given. From our research, training and praxis orientated perspective, the following points are of importance: when and on which philosophical-theoretical, institutional and ideological-political basis does sociology succeed in being consolidated as an independent academic discipline; to which central perspectives (in terms of methods, content and pragmatism) are we most likely to be able to reduce the respective national image of the discipline; which institutional and practical success has the subject attained in each country and which factors further or endanger the status quo of the discipline.

France: Marginality in the Discipline between Philosophical Foundation and State "Planification"

Despite the early foundation of sociology by Comte, Saint-Simon and

above all Durkheim in the 19th century, the discipline was unable to enjoy any institutional success beyond degrees in education, philosophy or moral science (Wagner 1990: 218ff; Bernoux 1990: 180; Clark 1973: 199). Up until the 1950s there were only a modest four, or rather five departments of sociology, two in Paris, and one each in Bordeaux, Toulouse and Strasbourg respectively (Drouard 1989: 68). Independent sociological trends could only be introduced after the Second World War, but until 1958 they remained (due to the lack of an adequate basic sociological training) split into historical-philosophical social theory at the universities on the one hand and state-initiated opinion poll research at the *Centre d'Etudes Sociologique* (CES) of the national research grant organization *Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique* (CNRS). The two conflicting tendencies – the "French sociologists' preoccupation with conceptualization and sociological theory" (Drouard 1985: 68) and the importing of empirical research techniques and concrete material projects could only be linked together slowly, such as in George Friedmann's sociology of work and the urban sociology of Henri Chombart de Lauwes. However, as Pollak remarks, these tendencies could only be linked by their excessive philosophical and ideological elevation (Pollak 1983: 6). The expansion of research commissions in the social sciences in the 1960s due to increased demand from the government resulted in the foundation of numerous social science departments, which however opened "further chances of development beyond the controlling academic authorities" for sociology (Pollak 1983: 9, my translation); as did the intellectually stimulating discussion scene in *Maison de Science de l'Homme*, since principally they made (and make) it possible for prominent academics to produce first-rate intellectual performances in surroundings with almost no discplinary structure. The specialisation and politically administrative dependence of an army of full and part-time researchers could have contributed to the "deplacement des mécanismes de régulation internes au groupe de sociologues" with a competitive "clientèlisme" (Montlibert 1982: 46) and thus have furthered "the discipline's indeterminate nature" (Drouard 1989: 73).

With the late introduction of independent sociological study programmes from 1958 onwards in the *faculté des lettres* (shortly after renamed the *faculté des lettres et sciences humaines*), the ensuing sharp increase in lecturing positions and student numbers – an "unmanageable

rush of degrees" (Drouard 1989: 72) – nevertheless scored clear institutional successes for French sociology. A new generation of sociologists "such as Pierre Bourdieu, Alain Touraine, Michel Crozier, Henri Mendras and Raymond Boudon were able to build up larger research centres" (Pollak 1983: 10, my translation) and made a not unimportant contribution to the international recognition of a challenging French theory formation. The persistent orientation of France's prominent academic figures towards Paris' intellectual milieu (still forced due to the politicization of the discipline in the 1960s), resulted above all in the strong tendency to publish in commited periodicals such as *Nouvel Observateur*, *Utopies*, *Espaces et Societés* etc. (Pollak 1983: 10, see also Lemert 1981: 14). This orientation enlarged on the one hand the *succès mondain* by turning to essayism and abandoning the discipline's strict analytical approach (Montlibert 1982: 49f), but on the other hand it hampered the formation of professional standards and the development of a genuine identity for the discipline. "Sociology, which already occupies a reduced place in faculties which have also been cut off from the CES has remained on the edge of economic, social and political life" (Drouard 1989: 75).

A considerable repertoire of scientific findings, the growing number of sociology graduates and according to Bernoux (1990: 200) approximately 1,500 actively researching sociologists – 500 each working in the CNRS, in the universities and for private organisations (Campelli estimates the number of sociologists working for the CNRS in 1982 at 328 and for the universities at 421 (Campelli 1985: 108 & 119)) – testify to a certain consolidation of sociology in France. A classificational analysis of the research interests and main fields of 1,460 French-speaking sociologists (published in 1990) confirms the persistent significance of the traditional topics of French sociology – in particular the sociology of religion, work, the family and education – but proves on the other hand the lack of a uniform conceptual approach and a binding paradigm for the diversity of the problems dealt with (Chartron et al. 1990: 33). Whether this professional potential can contribute to profiling and professionalizing French sociology or whether it supports Drouard's view of the "ill-defined role of the sociologist in French society as civil servant, expert and prophet" (Drouard 1989: 78) can only be clarified by a broader look at the structures for training and education in sociology and the careers which are pursued (see Lamnek/Schürmann 1993).

Britain: From Philanthropic Social Analysis to Critical Theories

Neither the lively empirical statistical observation of the society within the realms of civic charity (Jackson 1977: 22; Halliday 1981: 384), nor an academic outsider such as Spencer could establish sociology as a university discipline in Britain, rather they brought about a "detachment of empirical sociology from sociological theorizing" in the front line position between evolutionists and "social accountants" such as Charles Booth and Beatrice Webb that could not be overcome until the 1960s (Kent 1981: 124f.). The resistance of time-honoured universities such as Oxford and Cambridge to sociology, the dominance of an individualistic political economy, the fact that the discipline's competitor, anthropology, was given preferential recognition as a result of colonialism, and the cultural "taken for grantedness of British society" all supported sociology's "minimal state of existence" with only one chair in sociology up until 1945 (Albrow 1989: 194f). The London School of Economics was the only institution to offer a home for the development of sociology after the Second World War. The internationalism pursued there is illustrated by the leading role immigrants occupied as the founding fathers of the discipline: "The British Department of Sociology is incomplete without its foreign members and its cosmopolitanism is matched in Europe probably only by the Netherlands and Sweden" (Albrow 1993: 86). Nevertheless sociology in Britain was to succeed in the course of an "emerging consensus in the 1950s and 1960s about directions in social policy" (Albrow 1989: 201) in creating a type of synthesis out of opening up academic theory, reviving national traditions and following political demands.

A change in political climate since the war coalition of conservatives and labour favoured government support programmes for the social sciences. After a "foundation-laying era" in the late 1940s and the beginning of the 1950s "a period of explosively rapid growth" followed in which "employment in research, drawing on trained graduates and post-graduates of the previous decades, increased ... to over 6,000 in the universities and about 1,350 elsewhere by 1972-3" (Lisle 1984: 22f). The foundation of the *Social Science Research Council* in 1965 was accompanied by great optimism over the significance and possibilities for research in the social sciences. The SSRC financed research projects and gave grants to

"postgraduate students" (Eldridge 1990: 168) and its foundation was accompanied by a rapid expansion of courses on offer and the number of graduates: sociology "took a large share of the increase of university teachers in the social sciences from 212 in 1938-9 to 1,025 in 1962-3. ... By 1970 there were no fewer than thirty-seven university departments at which it was possible to take a higher degree with funding from the Social Science Research Council" (Albrow 1989: 203). Lisle noted a continuing rise in honours degrees from 33 in 1938-9, to 341 in 1962-3, and 1,309 in 1978 (Lisle 1984: 39).

As Halsey explains in his description of the "first group of career sociologists" (Halsey 1985: 151) at LSE, research work during this period concentrated on "empirical studies of British class structure within the theoretical framework of non-Marxist radicalism" (Halsey 1985: 161). With the foundation of the *British Sociological Association* in 1951, which by 1963 already had over 700 members (Albrow 1989: 204), the production of important work in the new sociological departments of the provinces and the formation of closely cooperating study groups, for example amongst others in the fields of religion, mass media, theory, war and military studies, employment, and medicine, the discipline was able to develop a healthy infrastructure. However, just as in other countries, sociology did not escape fundamental controversies over theory and the spread of dogmatically marxist approaches (Eldridge 1990: 168).

Dwindling trust in the possibilities of political reform and in the usefulness of sociology, plus the fact that the conservatives took office in 1970 lead to a turnaround in its popularity (Albrow 1989: 204). Conservative criticism of the left-wing orientation of the discipline and an enquiry into the achievements of the SSRC chaired by Lord Rothschild led to reorganisation and the renaming of the SSRC to the *Economic and Social Research Council* (ESRC). Sociology had to accept much tougher cuts in finances and staff than the other disciplines in the social sciences. It was advised against setting up further sociology departments (Albrow 1989: 204) and the number of postgraduate studentships was swiftly limited from a maximum of 1,526 (1971-2) to 250 (1988-89) (Eldridge 1990: 173f). Abrams reports of sociology being described as "alchemy" and "nonsense," the characterisation of its graduates as "unemployable" and a regressive "lamentation of incompetence" within the discipline which led to fears of the intellectual and institutional collapse of sociology. (A-

brams 1981: 54f). Roughly speaking, we can confirm that after the emergence of theoretical controversies, British sociology finds itself today in a typical position of professional self-doubt and public scepticism – a situation which is also typical for other European countries. "But it was precisely this oblique relation with political power, neither social engineering, nor voice of the establishment, representing therefore an intellectual independence while absorbing the full weight of European intellectual movements, which finally shifted British social theory from its outsider position in European thought" (Albrow 1993: 86).

Italy: Sociology in Oppositional Politics' Field of Tension

Although Pareto's, Mosca's and Michel's works are considered to be important milestones of European social theory and despite the early publication of *Rivista Italiana di Sociologia* in 1897, the strong position of neo-hegelian, idealistic philosophy in the universities hampered the early institutionalisation of the discipline in Italy. The "intellectual dictatorship" of the theories of Benedetto Croce (DiRenzo 1977: 329), and the ideologically similiarly oriented higher education policy of the fascist Minister for Education, Giovanni Gentile, prevented sociology from having any academic influence. It was not until the restructuring of society after the Second World War that "a particularly pressing and practical impetus" was given "to the redevelopment of sociology" (DiRenzo 1977: 331). The latest problems of industrialisation, urban development, migration and the economic gap between north and south provided the impetus for the first sociological studies. As the discipline was not represented at university, this type of work found its home in Turin, where a faculty of philosophy open to Anglo-saxon empiricism on the one hand and the private "Fondazione Olivetti" made sociological research possible (DiRenzo: 331; Pinto 1981: 674f). These first attempts at work in the discipline gained new support from the establishment of regional and centralized state research institutes initiated by the conservative-socialist coalition between PC and PSI (*Centro Sinistra*) such as the "Centro nazionale di prevenzione e difesa sociale" (CNPDS) and the "Instituto Lombardo per gli studi economici e sociali" (ILSES). Whereby the former was responsible for the foundation of the "Associazione italiana per le scienze sociali" (AISS) in 1958 (Wagner 1990: 381) which hosted the IV. World Congress for Sociology in Milan and Stresa (Pinto 1981: 679). Between

1961 and 1968, the "Comitato per le scienze politiche e sociali" (COSPOS) – a joint undertaking of the Olivetti and Ford foundations and the US Social Science and Research Council – also secured the continued existence and further development of sociological research (Wagner 1990: 395). Here we come across the probably unique constellation of the emergence of a professional career role for sociologists without the corresponding academic presence, in which almost the entire first and second generation of Italian representatives of the discipline grew up – including Alessandro Pizzorno, Francesco Alberoni, Massismo Paci, Laura Balbo and Vittorio Capecchi (Pinto 1981: 681; Wagner 1990: 367 & 395). This controversial dominance of a policy orientation (Wagner 1990: 392) led sociology into a sensitive dependence on political power play. It also fostered the schism criticized by DiRenzo between "theoretical dissertations and philosophical treatises" in the academic sector and "gross absence of theoretical perspectives and the lack of preoccupation with the development of theoretical explanation" in specialized empirical work in the fields beyond and alongside the universities (DiRenzo 1977: 247; Pinto 1981: 684).

At the beginning of the 60s only 19 positions for "professori incaricati" existed who were to teach sociological elements on law, history, statistics/demography and psychology degree courses (DiRenzo 1977: 333). It was not until a new chair of sociology was established in the "Facoltà di Magistero" (responsible for training teachers) in the University of Rome in 1961 (held by Franco Ferrarotti), and Alessandro Pizzorno was appointed to a chair of sociology in the Faculty of Economics at Urbino that the academic position of sociology changed (Pinto 1981: 683). Wagner cites the number of chairs in 1973 as 12 (Wagner 1990: 396), in 1975 DiRenzo counted 15 Heads of Department and 60 positions for "liberi docenti" who however once again only took on avant guarde positions on the fringes of the faculties (DiRenzo 1977: 334; Pinto 1981: 683).

A degree course with sociology as its main subject was not realized until 1962 with the foundation of the child of the reform coalition, the "Istituto Superiore de Sociologa" in Trento, (called the "Istituto Superiore di Scienze Sociali" from 1966 onwards). Up until 1971, the *laurea* programme in sociology at this "Libera Università" (which became a state university in 1982 (DAAD 1987: 41)) was "the only degree-granting programme available anywhere in Italy in which one could receive system-

atic and concentrated instruction and training in the field of sociology" (DiRenzo 1977: 336). Pinto counteracts these first successes at university level with the waves of political radicalisation from 1968 onwards – successes which reached their height at the beginning of the 1970s in the transformation of the faculties for political science into "the faculties of political and social sciences" and the establishment of degree courses with sociology as their main subject at the universities of Rome, Urbino, Naples and Salerno. The lecturers and students who had always been committed both to politics and their discipline in any case tried to instrumentalise sociology as an expression of these kinds of political positions. The debates which took place at the sociological congress "La crisi del metodo sociologico" in 1971 in Turin document this partial overlapping of left-wing agitation and sociological research, as a result of which even the AISS finally disintegrated (Pinto 1981: 689). It was only the successful "very consolidation and institutionalisation of what had been the extra-parliamentary left" (Pinto 1981: 698), in the 1970s, also expressed in the election success of the PCI, which made it possible to link committed sociological research interests back to state support and the renewed political establishment. Central research interests such as the position of the working classes, social movements, critical analyses of the job market and economic disintegration supplied sociology with a political-cultural centrality and consolidated its professional identity, since "the marginal social forces beside which it had fought have also become key fixtures of Italy's social and political horizon" (Pinto 1981: 699f), a combination which has to be included as a possible burden on future developments.

The Netherlands: Sociology as Applied Problem Solving

The beginnings of Dutch sociology have to be dated towards the end of the 19th century, when Sebald Rudolf Steinmetz founded the "Amsterdam School" of sociography – dominant up until the early 50s – (Heilbron 1988: 78; Laeyendecker 1990: 221) thus establishing the close interaction between "policymakers" and sociographers. His student Hendrik Ter Veen strengthened this tendency in sociological training, "stressing new methods of data collection like surveys and the interpretation of demographical, geographical, and economic data. Increasing government interest in physical and economic planning produced a clear demand for the sort of qualifications that the sociographical style had to offer"

(Blume et al. 1991: 174). Although a new generation of sociologists tried to expand this purely descriptive approach with elements of systematic theory construction in the 50s and 60s, the sociographers had left the discipline with some permanent features due to their proximity to administrative processes and their distance from philosophical influences. That is why Heilbron stresses: "Les pionniers allemands et francais de la sociologie universitaire étaient peu connus et les liens avec l'étranger étaient rares. ...Une des propriétés structurales de cette constellation était, et reste toujours, l'absence de la philosophie comme discipline formatrice" (Heilbron 1991: 79).

Consequently the modernizers of the discipline in the 50s may have extensively adopted American work, they preferred however primarily middle-range theories in accordance with Merton and insisted on strong empirical components. The Netherlands' particular geographical and political circumstances – high population density, land reclamation projects and the cultural conditions of a pragmatic "pacification democracy" (Blume et al 1991: 170f) – produced an extremely favourable climate (Laeyendecker 1990: 222) for social planning measures and sociological analyses (Blume et al. 1991: 175). Sociologists such as Van Doorn, Groemann, Lammers and Thoens, who all belonged to the sociographic tradition, set new standards with their work in the fields of social stratification, mobility, health behaviour and policy analysis (Becker/Leeuw 1992: 5f). The brisk demand for sociological findings ensured a downright boom in the number of students. Heilbron even establishes a rise from 94 first-year-students in 1954 to a maximum of 954 in 1969 and a stabilized new intake of 543 for 1982. The number of graduates climbed from 14 (in 1954) to 472 in 1969 to level out to 321 in 1982 (Heilbron 1988: 80). Just as in other European countries, during this period the discipline experienced a rapid expansion of sociological institutes and an enormous rise in the number of teaching staff. The student revolts of the late 60s severely shook this planning oriented atmosphere: students and several professors criticized the role of the social sciences as a stabilizer of existing circumstances (Laeyendecker 1990: 223). As a reaction to this, the economic recession and a change of government gave emphasis to the emerging efforts to reform degree courses. Inspection teams visited the individual university departments and drew up ranking lists of their achievement potential (e.g. taking the number of publications and

research grants as indicators) (Becker/Leeuw 1992: 9f). As a result of these checks, the expansion of sociological institutes was halted, some were closed down altogether and others had their finances severely limited. For Heilbron, the discipline's lack of autonomy is manifested in this unhindered influence from outside: "Privée d'une tradition classique, dépourvue de prestige universitaire et intellectuel, la discipline ne pouvait même plus justifier son existence par l'utilité des études qu'elle représentait" (Heilbron 1988: 81).

With regard to the main theoretical emphases and approaches and the significance of fundamental work in the fields of agricultural sociology, research into inequality, educational sociology and modernization theory, Laeyendecker refers to the competition between three large theoretical programmes: 1) that of figurational sociology which originates from the University of Amsterdam and J. Goudsblom, and orients itself on Norbert Elias; 2) the structurally individualist school with its analytical-nomological working methods which has its most prominent representatives in Reinhard Wippler from the University of Utrecht and S.M. Lindenberg from the University of Groningen; and 3) a so-called "data-based sociological practice" which has produced a professional paradigm for advising political actors with Marc van de Vall at the University of Leiden (Laeyendecker 1990: 228). Only a closer look at the conflicts and problems within Dutch sociology could explain whether the relatively high political and administrative effectiveness of sociology can be equated with a high level of professionalization within the discipline. In any case, the Dutch model offers a good contrast to the greater diversity and theoretical dissension of the discipline in the other countries of comparison.

An Outline of the German Situation

The intensive characterization of sociology in Germany in the previous contributions renders a detailed description of the development of the discipline in Germany superfluous. As a basis for a European comparison however it is necessary to point out in the form of a hypothesis a few particularities of the subject's history.

1. Although Max Weber, Ferdinand Tönnies, Georg Simmel, Alfred Vierkandt, and Leopold von Wiese amongst others were busy laying the foundations of sociology even before the start of the Second World War and 12 chairs in sociology plus a further 50 academics working in the so-

ciological field in its broadest sense constituted an initial institutional sphere as early as 1939, the young discipline remained largely limited to a marginal position as an ancillary subject for history or merely a focussing sociological perspective. This marginality was the result of the eminent influence of historicism, the philosophy of life, phenomenology and the paradigmatic discord in the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Soziologie* (German Sociological Assiociation, DGS), founded in 1909 (Jonas 1981: 167ff & 211 ff; Lepsius 1979; Mikl-Horke 1992: 120ff).

2. After the DGS was disbanded in 1934, and following the emigration of important social philosophers such as Max Horkheimer, Theodor W. Adorno, Karl Mannheim, and Theodor Geiger amongst others, the initial tolerance of a anti-rationalist, nationalist school of thought (Hans Freyer, Othmar Spann) and the survival of a theory-less empirical social research program loyal to the party line under National Socialism (Jonas 1981: 216f; Mikl-Horke 1992: 121f; Lamnek 1991; Wagner 1990), the reconstruction of the discipline from 1945 onwards was characterized by a partial revival of traditional positions and the selective reception of American social research in particular. Continuing to occupy the margins of the faculties and be organised along the lines of the humanities, once again a polarisation between empirical research and diverse philosophically or humanistically determined schools of thought asserted itself in sociology which culminated in the emergence of local schools which were relatively isolated from one another. An empirical-analytical school built around René König in Cologne, the critical-dialectical *Frankurter Schule* and the philosophical-anthropological cultural criticism of Helmut Schelsky in Münster marked the most important dividing lines (Lepsius 1979: 35ff; Lamnek 1991: 713). Even the DGS, re-formed in 1946 by L. von Wiese, and functioning largely as a conservative association of academics, could not contribute to unity and consolidation within the discipline (Wagner 1990: 365).

3. Therefore substantial incentives to build up an empirically sound sociology have to be traced back in particular to the initiatives beyond the university world and financial support programs from the United States. The UNESCO Institute for Social Sciences in Cologne, the Centre for Social Research in Dortmund and the Institute for Research into the Social Sciences in Darmstadt offered impressive initial research capacities but could only have an indirect effect on academic sociology, as could the

high number of US research funds (Lepsius 1979: 35; Wagner 1990: 378).

4. The expansion of the discipline in the universities which commenced towards the end of the 1950s was under the influence of extremely heterogeneous and competing conceptions of the discipline from the beginning. Neither the newly established course requirements for sociology as a main subject culminating in a *Diplom* title in Frankfurt (1955) and Berlin (1956), nor the numerous other alternative sociological training programs with the titles Magister Artium (M.A.) in the Faculty of Philosophy, or the combined solutions of *Diplom-Sozialwissenschaftler*, *Diplom-Sozialwirt* and *Diplom-Volkswirt* expressed a consensus on the discipline's main emphases, subject combination or practical relevance (Lepsius 1979: 47; for a critical view see Lamnek 1991: 709; von Ferber 1983: 33).

5. With the rapid expansion of the discipline in the 60s and 70s, which can be traced back not least to the foundation of numerous new universities and the expansive education policy of the social-liberal coalition, the heterogeneity of the training programs and course conceptions could be further consolidated. The professional self-recruitment made possible by the growing numbers of staff and research capacities rendered virtually every training orientation in the discipline which took place beyond the university superfluous. The number of professors rose from 25 in 1960 through to 69 in 1970 and to 190 in 1973 and accompanied an increase in the student population from 141 (1960) to 8,330 in 1976/7 (Lepsius 1979: 49; Lamnek 1991: 711; Lüschen 1979: 5).

6. Despite disappointed hopes of sociology's long-term participation in social planning and despite conflict-filled theoretical debates, sociology in Germany made itself at home in an environment of institutional and intellectual plurality (Reimann et al. 1991: 72). The permanent heterogeneity of theoretical and professional points of reference between the extreme poles of hermeneutically theorizing humanities and empirically sociological research pose sociology with a series of weighty problems to solve in the scenario of chronically overburdened mass universities and the political demand for training programs which meet the requirements of the job market.

It is not possible to do detailed justice to the career entry chances for German sociologists here either – a short outline will have to suffice.

Firstly, the incomplete statistics reveal the proportion of unemployed sociologists as lying between 10% and 17% – figures which need to be taken seriously (Birzer/Siefer 1991, Schneider/Höhmann/Lange 1983). Whilst the average yearly demand for qualified sociologists has been estimated at 150-200 (Vascovics 1984), each year 700-900 graduates of sociology offer their services on the job market, so that presumably only a minority of the estimated 7,000 sociologists working in 1984 were carrying out an activity which was suitable for their discipline. It is still the universities which offer the largest relative proportion of relevant work although the permanent orientation towards the university threatens to increase employment problems and job insecurity due to increasing lack of funds and the short-term contracts offered here.

Numerous current studies into the whereabouts of sociology graduates (Emmerling/Rülcker 1990, Schroeder 1988, Watzinger 1989, Welz/Maier/Wetzel 1992), show in addition that the possibility of employment in the private sector is still considered to be unsuitable for the discipline despite the fact that its significance as an alternative employer has risen. In the private sector extra qualifications are often asked for (data processing, economics, law) which are by no means self-evident components in the training of a sociologist.

Comparative Conclusion

Disenchanted Reform Euphoria and Pluralism within the Discipline

Relatively clear inner-European differences only arise with respect to the discipline's intellectual and cultural points of departure. In France and Germany, sociology emerged rather as a philosophical trend (or new academic perspective) in social theory, in which the Durkheim school in France generated greater cultural resonance and was thus not forced into clearly demarcating the discipline. In Germany on the other hand, the stronger rejection of empirical-positivist approaches meant that Weber's synthesis of empiricism and culture interpretation (*Kulturdeutung*) failed to a large degree thus promoting dissent within the discipline at an early stage. In Italy, a similiar cultural resistance to sociological empiricism can be observed which resulted in an even greater marginalization of the subject. In the Netherlands and Britain, the discipline developed out of field work in the sectors of policy advice and social reform, although its

identification with socialist trends in Britain ruled out an alliance between government and social geography as close as the one in the Netherlands.

Significant institutional success in the discipline can only be determined after the Second World War. In Britain, political goodwill favoured the expansion of the subject in the universities. In France, we can see a tentative development of capacities outside the university so that sociology in the universities remained an intellectual perspective between philosophy and history for the time being and could only present its own training program with sociology as a main subject toward the end of the 50s. In this respect, it bears some similarity with Italy where right up into the 1960s only non-university sociological research capacities existed. Here however an altogether greater association of the discipline with oppositional political forces arose, giving sociology an image as a discipline of reform and rebellion. In Germany, sociology at first organized itself as an academic discipline as a matter of priority, yet with a greater theoretical heterogeneity. In the Netherlands alone, philosophy was ruled out as the founding context and legitimating principle of the discipline, which allowed for the trouble-free fusion with questions in policy and administration science.

A European solidarity is revealed primarily in the close association of the discipline's expansion and support for research with the political rule of centre-left coalitions and administrative planning hopes. Similar European consensus is revealed in a certain radicalization and politicization of the discipline with the student revolts, so that marxism and theoretical pluralism upset the few consolidated foundations of the discipline. The Netherlands was affected the least by this phase which led to the disintegration of a unified appearance, whilst in the other countries the conflicts of this period continued to confront the priorities of consolidation and political commitment within the discipline. A third consensus is expressed in the strong expansion in the 60s and in the ensuing problem of an "overproduction" of graduates so that young sociologists found themselves confronted with the profession closing its doors.

The Diversity of Labels and a Lack of Standardization

A comparison of the circumstances in the individual European countries thus unearths – alongside the numerous national differences – a remarkable unity of problems, perhaps with the exception of the Netherlands.

The short description of the origins of sociology in Europe and its position in the universities has already shown that the discipline has not been allocated a particularly highly regarded, secure or accepted position in the education system or research field in any of the countries of comparison. The diffusion of subject material taught in the universities, polytechnics and in secondary education in Britain may well be relatively far advanced, as is the similar distribution of sociology across various types of higher education establishment, subsidiary subject courses and sixth form curricula in Germany. Yet compared with such prominent disciplines such as economics (in all countries), history (in France), the numerous (interdisciplinary) social and administrative sciences in Britain and politics in Italy, sociology is often only able to occupy a marginal position. Doubts over the ability of the subject to qualify itself for a profession have led to varying reactions, but seldom ones that have been coordinated across the profession. The greater interdisciplinary nature of the different degree courses in France and Britain can verify despite their assumed success that the public is barely aware of sociological skills and that sociologists are seen more as exotic figures and political critics (as in Italy) or as intellectuals (as in France). If furthermore the innumerable degree titles compete with differing course requirements, the entire graduate population of sociologists will become increasingly diffuse so that even the discipline's own representatives will lose track of them now and again.

Interdisciplinary Vocational Training or an Out of Work Discipline?

As one can see on the whole, the similarities are more striking than the differences in evaluating individual employment fields and the differing assessments of the professional usefulness of sociology in the respective countries can suggest. Everywhere – except perhaps within the professionally more successful discipline in the Netherlands – the graduates face a relatively closed job market and professional dequalification. Everywhere, representatives of the discipline experiment with new course contents in the form of increased practicality or heightening its interdisciplinary nature. The Italian sociologists are not the only representatives of the discipline who can be asked the heretical question of whether sociology – unmoved by reports of a lack of its graduates success – ought to retain its heterogenous training concepts and content itself with the role of an educational discipline with the simultaneous presence of highly pro-

fessionalised researchers at the top. This resigned minimum solution, aptly named the "struttura della scuola di massa a due livelli" by Balbo (Balbo 1973: 247), where a small elite is able to use the resources for gaining qualifications, whilst the majority of students are excluded from these privileged paths, may well be possible, but can really only be justified if an official and selective division, made according to universalistic criteria exists between a generalized basic grounding in the subject and an advanced further training for specialists – a division which can be conceived of most easily in the British university system and the numerous levels of the French educational landscape. Here too, or perhaps here in particular, the urgent necessity of creating an initial stepping stone qualification in sociology which is specific enough on the one hand to achieve a definition of the discipline, yet on the other hand remains open enough to make dialogue with other specialist roles, further education options and career realities possible.

Neither a dequalified "weak discipline" (Balbo) which offers no professional future for its graduates, nor a community of researchers which is divided up into disciplines in order to meet the direct demand nor one which unreflectedly strives to meet the external requirements of the state administration can give the continued existence of sociology as a research programme, degree subject and professional job title the permanent support (and justification) that it needs. For each of these extreme positions, it is possible to find corresponding phenomena in the hasty classifications of the national peculiarities outlined above – yet none of these images (of politically divided "muddling along," of a philosophical-intellectual discursive community, of a group of social reformist researchers and of an uncritical administrative workforce) would match the mutually shared, complicated reality of limited research resources, the heterogenous organisation of teaching and the fact that students are mostly left on their own to cope with finding a job after graduation. It would probably be more sensible to search in all five countries cooperatively for solutions to urgent problems; firstly, to discover a clever combination of the necessary vocational orientation and an interdisciplinary nature with the formation of a common recognizable level of knowledge; and secondly, to seek the production of sociological knowledge backed up by practically relevant research contributions, which can justify safeguarding disciplinary capacities.

Both of the goals described above can only be realized if, within the profession and amongst the students, the mental and organisational conditions are created and strengthened which will help the discipline to further develop a practically orientated unity on the outside and consentually consolidated unity on the inside. Organising the profession into associations and having a well-focused professional policy can contribute to this in particular. Here, in promoting applied skills by continual exchange with people working in the field, theoretical principles possess less central importance than coordinating abilities and public contacts.

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